

Resource Conservation & Development

Working Effectively with Livestock Producers (RCON 765)

Overview

Each farm and ranch is an interrelated ecosystem and economic system. If NRCS personnel are to assist livestock producers in matters of conservation and grassland management, they need a working knowledge of those livestock operations which affect and are affected by the producer's decisions and income. This course covers subjects such as: beef cattle production; animal nutrition and feeding; animal health management; farm and ranch facilities; bovine reproduction; livestock marketing; business management; working with producers; and field work.

Objectives

Upon completion of this training, participants will be able to:

1. apply knowledge of livestock operations and producer concerns to increase the effectiveness and acceptability of technical assistance provided to livestock producers.
2. use information on livestock operations and management to influence decision makers to better implement resource management systems.
3. demonstrate a new level of confidence and be better equipped to convene and plan with livestock producers.

Duration

2 weeks. Intensive classroom instruction is combined with field sessions.

Eligibility

Employees such as soil conservationists, range conservationists, agronomists, biologists, plant materials specialists, and others who have the responsibility of working with livestock operators using grazing resources may attend.

Other Information

A written examination will be used to measure training effectiveness.

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Introduction To FOCS (RCON 780)

Overview

This course demonstrates the use of the agencies computer platform to manage a field office. The nine steps of the planning process are evident throughout the course. Students receive reinforcement in using the FOCS software to manage the daily operations of the field office.

Objectives

Upon completion of this training, participants will be able to utilize FOCS to:

1. identify problems and document walk-in clients
2. determine objectives in planning.
3. inventory resources (land unit families).
4. make planning decisions.
5. implement the plan.
6. evaluate the plan.

Prerequisites

The participant should have a basic knowledge of the UNIX operating system that will allow trainees to log into the system. The participant should also have knowledge of basic keyboarding skills including an awareness of what the keys on the keyboard are used for and where they are generally located.

Duration

The course is designed to be flexible. Time required will be dependent upon the beginning skill level of the participants. Therefore the time required for the instruction will range from approximately 12 to 26 hours.

Eligibility

All employees who are associated with the Field Office line of business, including all employees using or providing information or data to the field offices. NRCS conservation partners should also be given the opportunity to attend the training.

Other Information

Each state will deliver the training with their resources. The training should include both theoretical and applied skills. This course will be heavily weighed to the applied skills. Each block of instruction should include a brief discussion of the applicable step of the planning process. Each block of instruction should be followed with hands-on activities to expose the users to expose the users to FOCS tasks listed in the course outline.

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Conservation Planning With FOCS (RCON 785)

Overview

This course builds upon the Resource Conservation - Introduction to FOCS course by fully implementing all steps of the planning process as detailed in the National Planning Procedures Handbook. The course emphasizes the use of FOCS as the business tool used in providing resource management plans to our clients.

Objectives

Upon completion of this training, participants will be able to bring together the nine steps of planning using FOCS as a tool to:

1. analyze resource data.
2. formulate alternatives.
3. evaluate alternatives.
4. develop conservation contracts.

Prerequisites

1. Successful completion of the Resource Conservation - Introduction to FOCS course.
2. Demonstrates a basic level of use of FOCS in conservation planning. (Ability to function in FOCS without detailed instructions.)
3. Must have had an introductory course in the FOTG and the planning process as detailed in the National Planning Procedures Handbook.

Duration

Estimated time for this course ranges from approximately 15 to 26 hours based on previous experiences and skills of the participants.

Eligibility

All employees and conservation partners who deliver technical products to NRCS clients. Also included are employees and partners who support and/or manage those that provide direct assistance and products.

Other Information

Each state will provide the training utilizing their resources. The process should include a balance of both theoretical and applied skills. Each block of instruction should involve a discussion of the integration of planning policy and procedure and FOCS. Each block should be followed with hands-on activities that result in user produced products such as a conservation plan or a conservation contract.